

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 01353 141622Z

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINR, (PRONK, J.P.), NL

SUBJ: MINISTER PRONK'S FUTURE IN DOUBT

1. DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION MINISTER, JAN PRONK'S POLITICAL FUTURE IS QUESTIONABLE AT MOMENT AS A RESULT OF DRUNKEN DRIVING CHARGE PLACED AGAINST HIM AFTER MARCH 6 TRAFFIC ACCIDENT. PRONK, DRIVING ALONE AT NIGHT, RAN OFF ROAD ONTO SOFT SHOULDER AND JUMPED FROM CAR JUST BEFORE IT OVERTURNED. HE THEN SUMMONED POLICE AND VOLUNTEERED FOR BLOOD-ALCOHOL TEST.
 2. CHIEF PROSECUTOR OF ZWOLLE DISTRICT COURT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT PRONK WILL BE PROSECUTED FOR DRUNKEN DRIVING. TEST SHOWED THAT PRONK HAD BLOOD-ALCOHOL LEVEL OF 1.41 AGAINST MAXIMUM OF 0.5 PERMISSIBLE UNDER DUTCH LAW. FURTHER COMPLICATING FACTOR IS PRIOR ARREST AND CONVICTION FOR SAME OFFENSE WHICH, FIVE YEARS AGO, RESULTED IN ONE-WEEK JAIL TERM.
 3. LABOR PARTY POLITICIANS ARE CONCERNED THAT CONVICTION THIS TIME WILL FORCE PRONK TO RESIGN FROM CABINET. TWO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENTARY LABOR PARTY HAVE TOLD US THEY SEE ABSOLUTELY NO WAY FOR HIM TO AVOID CONVICTION AND TWO-THREE WEEK SENTENCE. HOWEVER, PARLIAMENTARY GROUP LEADER ED VAN THIJN, IS COLLEAGUES, AND PRIMIN DEN UYL STAND BEHIND PRONK AND TAKE POSITION THAT WHILE HE SHOULD BE TREATED AS ANY
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PAGE 02 THE HA 01353 141622Z

OTHER CITIZEN, HE SHOULD NOT BE FORCED TO RESIGN. ONE LABOR

PARLIAMENTARIAN, WHO CLOSE ASSOCIATE AND NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR
OF PRONK, FEELS MINISTER WILL NOT BE ABLE WEATHER STORM.
HE THOUGHT OPPOSITION PARTIES SUPPORTED BY TWO CONFESSIOANAL
PARTIES IN GOVERNMENT COALITION LIKELY DEMAND HIS RESIGNATION.

4. WHILE TALENTED, PRONK, ONE OF THE CHAMPIONS OF DUTCH LEFT,
HAS MORE THAN HIS SHARE OF POLITICAL ENEMIES. HIS
ESPOUSAL OF RADICAL LEFT CAUSES BOTH BEFORE AND SINCE
ENTERING CABINET HAS SOURED LARGE SEGMENT OF DUTCH
POLITICAL CENTER, AS WELL AS RIGHT ON HIM. WHILE HIS
DEPARTURE WOULD BE WELCOME BY MANY, IT UNLIKELY THAT
CONGESSIOANAL PARTIES WOULD FORCE ISSUE TO SUCH AN
EXTENT THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD FAIL. CLAMOR FOR HIS
OUSTER MAY BE ENOUGH TO ACHIEVE DESIRED RESULT.
GOULD

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